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Pan-Europe - Now? An Open Letter to the Publisher of "European World".

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PAN-EUROPE -- NOW?

BY KLAUS MANN

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PUBLISHER OF "EUROPEAN WORLD"

My dear Signor Milo di Villagrazia,

It was with considerable interest that I have been reading the first issues of your magazine -- particularly your opening manifesto, Europa Ante Omnia. First of all, let me congratulate you on your ~~valuable~~ stimulating effort. I am in full sympathy with your ultimate goal -- the creation of a European Federation or, better still, the United States of Europe. Being of European origin and educated in a European spirit, I have always been keenly aware of the insoluble ties and affinities connecting the European nations among each other. Europe is an organic entity, an indivisible whole -- we all know that. There can be no doubt that Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European program was essentially sound and justified. As a very young man, back in the early twenties, I embraced wholeheartedly his ideas and tried to promote them by lecturing and writing for his Pan-Europa movement. But then came Hitler...

With Germany in the hands of irresponsible adventurers and Fascism spreading all over the continent, the Pan-European ideal became suddenly somewhat problematical. What kind of United Europe did we want? A Federation under the auspices of Hitler, Franco, and Mussolini? A "Fortress of Europe," dominated by Nazi Germany?

Clearly, there could be no progressive, peaceful Pan-Europe, as long as Fuehrer and Duce remained in power. The most urgent, most vital task now confronting all "good Europeans" was, to get

rid of the gangsters. It took nearly six years of tough fighting; but in the end it was done: Nazi-Fascism was defeated. Was this not the natural moment to restart and revitalize the campaign aiming at the continent's overdue unification?

It would seem so; and still, the approval with which I read your Pan-European appeal is curiously mixed with doubt and apprehension. Is the present situation actually propitious for the creation of a European hyper-State? Should we -- can we be for Pan-Europe, now?

Frankly, I do not think so. Of course, Pan-Europe will have to come into being -- sooner or later. Rather a little later; in any case, not now -- not right away. World-political conditions do not favour your project.

There are, in my opinion, two major factors^v complicating or preventing the creation of a European Federation, at this point. The first obstacle is the defeated Reich; the second, the victorious Soviet Union.

As for the former, your manifesto deals with it in a manner which strikes me as ~~unusually~~ inadequate and superficial. The latter point -- even more complex and more significant! -- is hardly mentioned at all. That is why I find your introductory "declaration of faith" unsatisfactory, even though not without persuasive, thought-provoking arguments.

Let me first explain to you why I cannot share your optimism as regards the German problem. Germany, you assert, "would practically cease to be a menace," once that a European Federation will have been established. For how could the Reich attempt to dominate the whole continent, if there is "only one federal War Office and one federal army"? The idea does not seem to have occurred to you that Germany -- the strongest, most dynamic nation of the continent, besides Russia -- might attempt to use ~~the~~^{your} federal War Office and ~~the~~^{your} federal

army as instruments for her own aggressive purposes. Or rather, the idea may have occurred to you, but you try to brush it aside by suggesting, in parenthesis, that "it might be advisable to exclude the Germans" from those "organisms" (i.e. federal War Office and army) "for a certain number of years owing to their bad precedents."

What a weak and inconsistent compromise! Either Germany is acceptable to the European Federation, or she is not. But if you don't trust her sufficiently to let her participate in the federal army and War Office -- how could you admit her to the Federal Law Court and Government? If the Germans are not good enough to serve as European soldiers -- how could they be good European citizens?

Obviously, without German participation there can be no United States of Europe. But is German participation desirable -- is it possible, under present conditions? The answer is: no. German participation is not -- or not yet -- desirable or possible.

Germany is unacceptable because those nations who had to suffer most from her aggression ^{on} -- ~~Poland, Czechoslovakia,~~ France, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, ^{Yugoslavia} Greece, The Netherlands -- would hardly be inclined to collaborate with her within the framework of a federal State.

Germany is unacceptable because she is today not the master of her own destiny but depends on the victorious powers occupying her territory. How could Pan-Europe be capable of dealing, "on a footing of complete equality," with the Great Ones -- as you think it should --, if the largest, most important member of the Federation is compelled to live under ~~complete~~ Allied tutelage?

Germany is unacceptable, not so much because of her past sins and errors, as because of her present moral and political condition. There are not the slightest signs of repentance or understanding noticeable in the German character. The Germans are shockingly unchanged -- as arrogant, as insidious, as dangerous as ever. Still

Nazis at heart, they do not regret anything, except their defeat. They are not interested in Europe -- only in their revenge. Yes, they would welcome the Federation -- as a device to be used in their own interest. And their interest, their ambition, their fixed idea remains what it has always been: p o w e r ! The "master race" has by no means abdicated.

Even now Germany continues to work for her sinister purposes. Through all kinds of devious channels, German (and pro-German, Neo-Fascist) propaganda tries to increase and exploit any existing or potential tension between the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the Anglo-Saxons, on the other. This tragic tension is indeed the great hope, the joy, the trump, the triumph of all Fascist-minded, war-minded people in post-Fascist, post-war Europe. Which brings me to the second main point speaking against a premature establishment of a federal European system.

For any European union that might materialize under present conditions would inevitably become an ally, if not an annex, of one of the two great power blocs -- either the Russian or the Anglo-Saxon. The Anglo-Saxons do not want, and would not tolerate, the formation of a Pan-Europe under Soviet auspices -- ~~while~~ just as the Soviets do not want, and would not tolerate, the establishment of a Pan-Europe sponsored by the Anglo-Saxons.

You, Signor Milo di Villagrazia, must know all this as well as I do; yet you talk as though you were unaware of those basic facts. Your manifesto starts from an incorrect supposition. The Pan-Europe you desire and advocate would not and could not be an independent political entity, able to function as "a passage, a conjunction between the Anglo-Saxon and the Russian world" (as you put it). Europe is today a defeated, prostrated, impoverished continent. The European Federation, if established now, would belong either to the Russian or to the Anglo-Saxon sphere of influence.

Let us be realistic! The division of Europe into two great spheres of influence is a fact -- whether we like it or not. I, for one, do not like it -- and I suppose you don't, either. But there we are: we'd better face the state of affairs as it actually is.

I don't say that this state of affairs is inspiring or that it ought to be maintained for ever. On the contrary, the status quo in the world, and particularly in Europe, is, in my opinion, most unsatisfactory, most alarming. The peace we are going to get (if any) will be a dubious compromise -- very much like the Peace of Westphalia which ended the Thirty Year War, and which Hegel described as a "eine konstituierte Anarchie" (a legally established anarchy). And how could it be otherwise? The victorious powers -- namely, the Russians and the Anglo-Americans -- do not trust and do not like each other.

There has never been much sympathy and confidence between them. The Soviet Union has always regarded the capitalist world as her potential enemy -- and wasn't she quite right in doing so? The Soviet Union is today, and has always been, alone, isolated, hated. Why? Because of her "Slav expansionist policy?" But she was attacked and boycotted when she had no military power and could certainly not have risked any "imperialistic adventures."

Has Russia aroused the general animosity because her regime is a dictatorship, not a democracy? But, curiously enough, the same people who discover their ardently democratic principles when criticizing the Soviet Union, were perfectly willing to do business with Hitler, and are even now quite lenient and tolerant when it comes to dealing with Hitler's old satellite, Francisco Franco of Spain.

The simple truth is that the Soviet Union is today, and has always been, unpopular in the capitalist world, not because she is "authoritarian" or "imperialistic," but because she is communist. Wealthy people, quite understandably, are opposed to Communism. Public opinion

in the capitalist world is shaped, controlled, directed by the rich and their stooges.

I can guess what you may now be thinking, my dear Signor Milo di Villagrazia. "He's a Communist," that's what you think -- shrugging your shoulders quite disgustedly. Or maybe you choose to call me a "fellow-traveller" or "parlour pink."

Well, I happen to be nothing of the kind. If I were, I certainly would not hesitate to say so; but the truth is that I am not, and have never been, a Communist or a "fellow-traveller." I do not believe in Marxism. (How could I? -- being an artist, that is to say an incurable individualist, and, moreover, preoccupied with religious, metaphysical problems.) I do not believe in dictatorship. I would not like to live in Russia. It was not by accident that I went to the United States of America when there was no place for people of my stamp in Fascist Europe anymore. I went to America because I believe in democracy and because I like the American way of life. (It's the American way of life I like -- not the Russian!) I try to be a good American citizen, and for almost three years I have tried to be a good American soldier in the defense of the U.S. Constitution which I have sworn to uphold.

(stress these points)

It seems advisable, if not necessary, alas, to ~~make this~~ ~~elucidation of reality~~ in this particular context; for in witch-hunting days such as ours, anyone who ventures to say a word for the Soviet Union risks to be suspected of the most sinister motives. But I have no sinister motives at all when stating, plainly and frankly, that I am sick and tired of the hypocrisy I sense in most of the current talk about and against Russia.

Why are people so surprised to find the Soviets distrustful and uncoöperative in their attitude toward the western powers? Haven't

the western powers tried their very best to ruin the Soviet Union?
As soon as the ^{Bolshevik} revolutionary regime was established, the Anglo-Americans attempted to stamp it out by means of military intervention. When this manoeuvre failed, the capitalist world began to boycott the socialist colossus diplomatically, politically and economically. The fear of Russia and ~~Russia~~ Communism was the decisive factor ⁱⁿ international politics, from 1918 up to 1939. The great democracies favoured, fostered, financed Fascism everywhere as a "defense mechanism against Bolshevism." Abyssinia, the Spanish Republic, Czechoslovakia were sold out in order to strengthen the Anti-Comintern.

It is true that, in the summer of 1939, Moscow made the disgraceful mistake of signing a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany, thus enabling Hitler to attack the West. But was this cynical gesture not the direct, logical consequence of another blunder -- even more fatal, even more treacherous -- committed previously by the democracies? Without Munich, there would have been no Stalin-Hitler Pact. Litvinov, champion of Collective Security, might have maintained his influence in the Kremlin, if Chamberlain and Daladier had not betrayed the Indivisible Peace.

But however grave and shocking Russia's error may have been -- she made good for it by contributing decisively to Allied victory, once ~~that~~ Hitler had broken the ^{Pact} ~~compact~~ and invaded Soviet territory. For ^{some time} ~~while~~ it looked as if the West was overcoming its old ^{aversion} ~~antipathy~~ ~~of the Soviet Union~~; public opinion in the Anglo-American world recognized gratefully the magnitude of Russia's heroic contribution. But even while the war was still on and millions of Russians were sacrificing their lives for the common cause, there were voices, both in Great Britain and the United States, disparaging, suspecting, slandering the eastern ally. And as soon as the war was over, the anti-Russian campaign became as wide-spread, as violent and venomous as

ever before.

The partnership between the Russians and the Anglo-Saxons has never been ^{a true} ~~an~~ alliance; it was an expediency arrangement, necessitated by Hitler's boundless, insane aggression. The East has never trusted the West, ^{nor} has the West ever had any confidence in the intentions of its eastern partner. Yet some kind of modus vivendi, a practicable compromise had to be found by the two antagonistic victors -- Russians and Anglo-~~Russian~~ Americans. So the three great leaders of the three great nations agreed upon a certain scheme -- not a perfect scheme, to be sure; but a feasible one.

The division of Europe into spheres of influence is the work of Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill -- three powerful partners who didn't trust each other. Russia -- devastated, exhausted after years of desperate struggle -- ~~has~~ decided ^{to} not to tolerate ~~any more~~ ^{any more.} anti-Soviet governments or coalitions at her frontiers. The countries adjacent to Russian territory are not free to make independent decisions. They belong to the Russian sphere of influence. Russia will not allow them to join a Federation which ^{it} might turn out to be anti-Russian in its purposes and in its policy. Yugoslavia would not be allowed to join; nor would Finland, the Baltic States, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria or Rumania.

Don't you know that, Signor Milo di Villagrazia? Naturally you do! Why then this forced naïveté, this artificial innocence?

Your Open Letter to Marshal Stalin (whose correct title, by the way, is "Generalissimus") sounds hollow and hypocritical to me. For you fail to mention the most pertinent, the decisive point -- namely, that the Russian dictator does not trust the capitalist world. This deliberate omission renders all your other arguments nonsensical. Of course, the master of Russia might be willing to help you in constructing "that European unity which is the fundamental basis of a true collaboration between the great Federations and the only way

in which world peace and happiness among men can be achieved;" yes, Stalin would surely like to participate in such a noble effort -- if only he trusted you, if he could have confidence in the good will of the western world. But as he does not trust you and the western world, he is opposed to your project.

You would like to go ahead with your plans all the same -- if necessary without the countries influenced or dominated by the Soviet Union. The founder of the Pan-Europe movement, Count Coudenhove-Kalergi, has ~~declared~~ ^{declared} that, if Moscow prevents certain European nations from joining the Federation, one will have to "unify" all those countries free of Russian influence. In other words, what has been originally conceived, and is still being presented, as a unification of the continent would actually become an anti-Russian coalition, designed to deepen and intensify any potential or existing conflict between East and West.

This conflict, however -- far from being the enjoyable prospect as which certain reactionaries, in Europe and elsewhere, seem to regard it -- is indeed the great danger confronting our civilization. There must be no clash between East and West, lest Europe perish along with all the other continents.

How can the clash be avoided?

By patience, by good will, by extreme caution and diplomacy. Our great chance is that there will be no war right now. I don't think there will. The major parties concerned -- the Russians as well as the Anglo-Americans -- are tired of war; they are not in a fighting mood, not in a fighting condition. This general inability to face another armed conflict in the near future, is the only sound basis for any optimism, at this point. If war can be avoided for the next few years, ~~to some~~ it may be possible to avoid it altogether.

For -- as you, Signor Milo di Villagrazia, point ⁸ out aptly and correctly -- "it is not true that the two systems (Anglo-Saxon and

Russian) are irreconcilable; on the contrary, they could complete each other magnificently if the Anglo-Americans would admit into their Capitalist system the just and praise-worthy social reforms brought about by the great socialist federation, and if the latter would attenuate its dictatorial form of government (now longer necessary now that the revolutionary period is over), gradually adopting those democratic methods which, in Anglo-Saxon countries, are the sign of a great civilization and the result of centuries of experience."

But a reconciliation of this kind cannot be enforced or improvised over night; it has to develop slowly, gradually, organically. Such a process will take time -- several decades, perhaps. It will take a lot of work, good will and patience on both sides. ⁽⁷²⁾Patience above all! Patience is a great virtue -- rare but indispensable. Let us have patience!

I think you are quite mistaken, Signor Milo di Villagrazia, when asserting that "the advocates of a deferred federation become, in reality, its most dangerous enemies." Quite the contrary, the best thing good Europeans can do right now, in my opinion, is -- to wait, to be patient... Your Federation will come into being -- inevitably, almost automatically -- once that the present tension between Russians and Anglo-Americans will have ceased to exist. As long as that tension continues, there will be no real peace -- just a "legally established anarchy;" there will be no international collaboration, there will be no unification of the European continent.

Be patient, Signor Milo di Villagrazia! Be patient, Europeans! Give Germany time to recover from the terrible crisis she is passing through; to reestablish, little by little, her moral, political and economic equilibrium! Let the other European countries tackle the enormous task of interior reconstruction! Get rid of the remnants of Fascism in Europe! Get rid of Francisco Franco! (Do you want the Spanish fuehrer as a member of your Federal Government, Signor Milo

di Villagrazia?) Get rid of compromised royalty that has been too long the partner and protector of Fascist criminals! Consolidate European democracy! Establish governments that do not mean a potential threat to the Soviet Union! (Why does Benes of Czechoslovakia enjoy the confidence of the Kremlin? He is certainly a good European -- not a Bolshevik or a stooge of Moscow. But Moscow knows that he sincerely wants collaboration; that is why Moscow collaborates with him.)

Do everything you can to help in mitigating and overcoming the tension between Russians and Anglo-Saxons -- between socialism and democracy!

Do everything in your power to help in maintaining peace, instead of provoking new conflicts by asking for the impossible -- namely, the immediate establishment of a European Federation!

Let us have peace, and in the end you will have Pan-Europe!

ROME,
APRIL, 1946

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

KLAUS MANN -- born in Munich (Germany), 18 November, 1906, as the oldest son of Thomas Mann. Novelist, playwright, critic, journalist, lecturer. Author of about 20 books -- three of which will soon be published in Italy. (THE TURNING POINT: an autobiography; ANDRÉ GIDE: a biographical essay; MEPHISTO: the story of an actor's career in Nazi Germany.) -- Came to Italy in 1943, as a soldier of the U.S. Fifth Army; was later assigned to the editorial staff of The Stars and Stripes, Mediterranean Edition.

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